

A ROSE OF MEXICO

HARRY L. NEWTON'S One-Act Comedy Sketches, Monologues and Dramatic Episodes

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M. WITMARK & SONS,

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A ROSE OF MEXICO

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

By
HARRY L. NEWTON

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CHARACTERS:

CARMITA.....*An Americanized Mexican Maiden*

PEDRO.....*A Mexican Bandit*

LOCALITY.—The barber shop of Carmita's father
in Garcia, New Mexico.

TIME.—The present.

SYNOPSIS:

Carmita, a Mexican girl, has recently returned from school in the United States, imbued with American ideas of right and wrong. Pedro, a Mexican youth who has been in love with her for some years, has turned bandit in her absence to secure money enough to ask her to become his wife.

He calls at her father's barber shop and, finding her alone, pleads his suit; she upbraids him for his wickedness, and he tells her it was for love of her that he became a thief and a murderer.

He discovers that she loves one Frank Carter. He threatens Carter's life; she laughs at him desirively. Mad with anger and to prove himself the better man, he shows her a roll of money taken from Carter that day—the pay roll, in fact, which Carter may be accused of stealing.

By stratagem she obtains his Bowie knife and revolver, and compels him to give up the stolen money, saving her sweetheart's honor thereby.

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COSTUMES.

CARMITA.—Is a typical American-Mexican girl, but dresses in a mixture of both American and Mexican clothing. The suggestion being an up-to-date tailor-made skirt and perhaps a fancy buckskin jacket. She wears high-heeled boots, and is altogether a very smart young lady. In disposition she is inclined to be mischievous, vivacious, and desperately passionate, as the occasion may warrant. She has very recently returned from a seminary in the United States, and has acquired the mannerisms, speech, etc., of the up-to-date American girl.

PEDRO.—A typical Mexican youth, sporting picturesque clothes and a large sombrero. Wears a belt beneath jacket, in which is carried a large revolver and a Bowie knife. He smokes cigarettes incessantly; speaks with a marked Mexican accent, and is a swaggering bravo withal, although care should be taken that the character be not played too "heavy."

PROPERTIES.

A barber's chair. Mirror to hang on wall. Wash-stand, with pitcher, bowl, shaving mug, razors, etc. Table cloth. Magazines and newspapers. Bowie knife and cigarettes for Pedro. Revolver. Pack--age of bills for Pedro.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage, facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; C., centre of stage.

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By HARVEY L. NEWTON.

SCENE.—The barber shop of Carmita's father in Garcia, Mexico. The set is a plain interior in "three," with practical door back R., backed by mountain or wood view. There are also doors R. and L.; right door must be practical. The general appearance of room must resemble crude frontier barber shop. A barber chair, with mirror on wall in front of chair, stands L. Alongside is a wash-stand, with pitcher, bowl, shaving mug, razors, etc. In centre of stage is an ordinary kitchen table (30 by 36), covered over with a table cloth hanging on all sides to the floor. On table are magazines, papers, etc.; on either side of table is a wooden chair.

(At rise of curtain there is no one on stage. The sound of a horse rapidly galloping is heard in the distance, then gradually growing, and at last the sound ceases, as if the horse had been brought to a halt a short distance from the doorway. Then PEDRO thrusts his head in a cautious manner through the doorway and makes an eager and careful survey of the room. Then at last, satisfied that there is no one within, he enters. In right hand he carries his revolver, ready for instant action. He begins a careful examination of the room, in a search

for a concealed enemy; going to doors R. and L., he suddenly throws them open. Then, apparently satisfied that there is nobody about, he starts for centre of stage, discovers table with the long cloth, walks cautiously around it, then makes a sudden dart, throws up the cloth and with pistol leveled looks under table. As he is just finishing this operation CARMITA appears in doorway R., and stands watching him for an instant with an amused smile. Then she closes door behind her, and at the sound of the latch clicking PEDRO whirls about, with revolver pointed ready for instant use.)

CARMITA (*Mockingly*)—So, Señor Pedro! And what, pray, did you expect to find under our poor, defenceless little table—a sheriff and his posse?

PEDRO (*Shame-facedly, and putting revolver in holster*)—Perhaps, Señorita Carmita. One can never tell these days. One cannot afford to take chances. (*Rolls a cigarette.*)

CARMITA—True. And to what am I indebted for the honor of a visit from such a celebrated person as the only Pedro Sardello? Do you come on business, Señor Bandit? (*Laughs teasingly, leaning languidly against door casing.*)

PEDRO—No, Señorita—hardly. I was but passing, and—and thought I would look in. (*Lights cigarette.*)

CARMITA—Help yourself, by all means. Take a good look.

PEDRO (*As if struck by a sudden suspicion, draws revolver and glances keenly about room*)—And

what does the Señorita mean by take a *good* look?

CARMITA (*Laughs mockingly before replying*)—Oh, but isn't he the brave one! He is as nervous as a school girl at the sight of a mouse. (*Goes to table, sits on edge, idly swinging feet back and forth, but eyeing him keenly the while.*)

PEDRO (*Eyes busy searching the room as he speaks*)—Why not? It is an easy matter to lie concealed and with one little pull of a finger, *sacré!*—the concealed one is richer by \$10,000. Is it not so? (*Restores pistol to belt.*)

CARMITA (*Laughing and swinging feet back and forth*)—Si, Señor Bandit, of course. (*Becoming suddenly serious.*) You are worth a lot of money, aren't you—dead or a prisoner?

PEDRO (*Taking off sombrero and making a low, sweeping bow*)—Si, Señorita. Some folks have been good enough to so declare.

CARMITA—Well, to be perfectly candid with you, Pedro, either dead or a prisoner is, in my estimation, the only way you are of any account.

PEDRO (*Tossing cigarette away and then rolling another*)—The fair Señorita is disposed to be in a rather sarcastic mood this morning. (*Goes alongside of her and leans insolently against table, peering boldly up into her face.*) What is the reason, eh? There was a time, not so very much long ago, when you would have thought twice before making such a remark. You have much changed, Señorita—much changed. Is it the American way you have learned at your school there? (*Lights cigarette,*

then puffs and blows smoke coolly into her face.)

CARMITA (*Meeting his gaze calmly for an instant; then suddenly grabs cigarette from his mouth*)—The Americans never taught me to stand for cigarette smoke being puffed into my face, Mister Bandit. (*Throws cigarette on floor.*)

PEDRO (*Stares in stupefied amazement at her for an instant, then clinches his fist and raises it threateningly above her head*)—Caramba! You—

CARMITA (*Raises her face to his and looks him coolly in the eye*)—Don't you swear, either, Pedro. And it is extremely bad form to raise your hand to a lady. Get me?

PEDRO (*Slowly lowering fist, then backing away from her and surveying her coldly for an instant; then, speaking in tense voice*)—Señorita, nobody ever did that to me before, and—

CARMITA—And, as they say in the United States, "got away with it," eh, Pedro?

PEDRO—I have killed, Señorita—for less. (*Takes out another cigarette.*)

CARMITA—Yes, Pedro; I understand that you have grown to be quite a bad boy since I've been away to school. You have made quite some reputation for yourself—robbing and killing folks. Is it not so, Pedro?

PEDRO (*Slowly lighting cigarette before replying, but holding extinguished match between his thumb and finger*)—Si, Señorita. I rob those ~~that~~ have much plenty. And those that consider they are better men than I, I— Well, they are no more to me

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than, so— (*Flips match away from between his fingers, and then shrugs his shoulders expressively.*)

CARMITA (*Jumps off table and faces him angrily*)—And now—now you dare to come to me and boast of your deeds! Go! (*Stamps foot angrily on floor.*) Go! I will not listen to another word. (*Points to door.*)

PEDRO (*Calmly puffing at cigarette and blowing the smoke high in the air; then*)—It might be well for the Señorita Carmita to listen. Maybe I might have something of much interest to say. Maybe—eh?

CARMITA (*Looking at him steadily before replying*)—Maybe, Pedro. I am only a woman, and women are sometimes curious.

PEDRO—Aha! (*Blowing out a puff of smoke; then*) Your good father, Señorita—is he at home?

CARMITA—No. But why ask for him? Does what you have to impart concern him?

PEDRO—No. What I have to impart concerns no one but you—

CARMITA—Say, aren't you afraid the sheriff might drop in here, and—

PEDRO (*Hands fall to revolver and knife as he answers*)—It would be his last drop.

CARMITA—Come, come, Pedro, get down to cases. What's the game, anyhow?

PEDRO (*Once more letting his eyes roam about the room in a searching manner*)—Well, I might want a shave, small gal. (*Rubs chin reflectively with tips of fingers.*) Yes, I think I could be much

pleased with a shave. Do you not think so, small gal?

CARMITA (*Shrugs shoulders indifferently*)—It is of no consequence to me. But you must come later. Father is away now.

PEDRO—That is why I could be much pleased with a shave. (*Bows mockingly*.)

CARMITA (*Sharply*)—What do you mean?

PEDRO—I mean, small gal, that it is from you that I am to be shaved—eh?

CARMITA (*Laughs mockingly; then*)—To use another good American expression, “You’ve got a swell chance of getting a shave from me.” Do you get that?

PEDRO—Aha! You laugh! Why? You have become too much highly educated to shave your father’s customers some more? You are too much swell person—eh?

CARMITA—Maybe, Pedro. But the principal and top-notch reason is—I am some particular who I shave. And, as they also say on various occasions in the United States, “Don’t slam the door as you go out.” (*Turns and starts to exit*.)

PEDRO (*Springing after her, seizing her by one wrist and whirling her about, facing him*)—So! You make me do something we both feel sorry for maybe. I have much to talk to you. It is much plenty better if you listen. Eh?

CARMITA (*Trying to loosen his grip on her wrist*)—Release me—

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PEDRO—Then you must make me one promise. Shave me. Is it yes?

CARMITA (*Angrily*)—It is no. No—no—no! (*Stamps foot.*)

PEDRO (*Slowly releases her wrist, then steps back from her, folds arms across his breast and scans her from head to foot.*) Small gal, you are one little devil—also one angel, all in one. I could kill you one minute—love you the next. But you *shall* listen to me—and listen well. Sit down! (*He points commandingly to a chair, and she slowly sits in it, her eyes meanwhile fixed on his with a fascinated stare. When she is seated he leans against the table and continues*) : Carmita, in the past few months I make much money—

CARMITA—*Stole* it, you mean.

PEDRO (*Shrugs shoulders indifferently, then takes out and makes another cigarette, lights it*)—As to that, what matter? I have got much money—and that is much plenty. (*Blows smoke languidly.*)

CARMITA (*Bitterly*)—Much plenty—you are right!

PEDRO—How I got this money is of no matter. I am through now—all through. From now on nobody shall call me Pedro the Bandit. Instead, they shall call me “Pedro, Honest Pedro.” I shall be much a reform man. You see? (*Puffs on cigarette.*)

CARMITA—What! *You* reform? Reform and *keep* all your—the money you stole?

PEDRO—Si, Señorita. And why not? It is done

every day—even in the United States. Besides, is it not mine to keep? Did I not scheme and plan for it, fight for it, and—

CARMITA—Kill for it!

PEDRO (*Shrugs shoulders indifferently*)—What would you? One must do those things these days, small gal.

CARMITA (*Rising from chair and facing him sternly*)—And why do you tell me about your ill-gotten wealth? Why flaunt your crimes in my presence?

PEDRO (*Throwing away cigarette and speaking earnestly and passionately*)—Why? Hear me and you shall know, small gal. A long time ago, before you journeyed to those pigs of Americanos, you used to smile on me, joke with me, and make my heart beat with much hope and joy. Then I say to me, “Pedro, some day you got to take this small gal and make her your wife—you make her Mrs. Pedro Sardello.” And every time I say these words to me it makes one sound in my ears like sweetest kind of music. Then you smile and speak kind to me, and my heart jumps with much joy again. Then again some more I say to me, “Pedro, you got no money; you are one much poor man. It is not good to be poor man, Pedro. You no can buy small gal nice presents when she is Mrs. Pedro Sardello.” Then I say to me again, “Pedro, you must go get money and be rich man, then small gal be Mrs. Pedro Sardello and be much plenty happy.” Then I think maybe I work hard and become a rich feller

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like some I know. Then I try that, small gal, but I no can make a fat purse. Then all at once I see the facts. I say to me, "Pedro, many mens have much money—too much. They no get it honest; it belongs as much to you, Pedro, as to them. Go get it, Pedro; go get it." (*She starts to rise from chair, but he stops her by a gesture, and continues in quick, passionate voice*) Pretty soon, bye-and-bye, I commence to get money. First one rich man, then another one he give it to me. But never do I take it from those that be come by their money honestly. And always I have in my mind one grand, big object—you! But now—now I—(*Sighs wearily*)—Now you act cold when you see me. You no make me a sweet smile like you did once. You make journey to United States, you come back—you much are different. I no can figure it. I think once it is because I am poor man. But now—now you know I am rich man, and still you make me no sweet smile. You—

CARMITA (*Interrupting him by rising from chair and holding up one hand commandingly*)—Stop, Pedro! There's no use to go further. I understand. I understand your motive—and regret that I have been the cause of your becoming what you are. If I ever gave you cause to think that I cared for you, I am sorry—awfully sorry, Pedro. I never loved you—never!

PEDRO (*Slowly backing away from her with uplifted hands, then stopping and leaning fiercely to-*

ward her, with face working angrily)—You—you never loved me?

CARMITA (*Sadly*)—No, Pedro—never!

PEDRO—You no—no love me now?

CARMITA—No—now nor never.

PEDRO—Aha! Maybe you love some other man—eh? (*Right hand falls on revolver butt.*)

CARMITA (*Defiantly*)—Well, and if so, what matters it to you?

PEDRO—Well, *I kill man you love!*

CARMITA (*Laughs mockingly*)—YOU kill him? Why, Pedro, he could take care of himself among fifty such as you. (*Snaps fingers in his face.*)

PEDRO—Aha! You think so, eh? Point him to me and we shall see. (*Toys with knife handle.*)

CARMITA (*Laughs*)—Frank Carter would make you find a new street if ever he got after you—(*Stops abruptly as she realizes she has betrayed her sweetheart's name; then she exclaims in a hoarse whisper aside*) My God—what have I done!

PEDRO (*Stares in surprise as she mentions the name*)—Aha! I got much information that time, eh? So, it is Frank Carter—he is your lover!

CARMITA (*Terror-stricken*)—No, no, Pedro! I was but joking.

PEDRO—You lie! (*Goes swiftly to door at back, looks off R. and L., then reenters and closes door behind him and comes down to her. She kneels in terror, centre stage.*) Don't be afraid, small gal. I shall make you no harm. I have something here maybe you look upon with much interest—maybe

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much interest. (*Takes from an inside pocket a large packet, greenback size.*) See, small gal; look with all your eyes on this. Do you know what this is I hold before your eyes?

CARMITA (*Agitated*)—No, no! How should I?

PEDRO—It is once belong to your lover—Frank Carter. It is the one big money pay roll for the men who work under him. Now it belong all to me. Pedro took it from him a little while ago. And you said he could hold his own against fifty like me. Bah! He was much easy.

CARMITA (*Springing to her feet and clutching at the package*)—It is his—give it to me, you scoundrel! Give it to me, I say! (*Struggles for its possession.*)

PEDRO (*Holding her back with one hand, while with other hand he holds package behind his back*)—Hush, small gal. You make too much fuss over a small thing. Maybe you can have it—maybe no. It all depends much on you. Savve?

CARMITA—You thief! Don't you know you will be hunted down, and—

PEDRO (*Interrupting, coolly*)—I take chance on that, small gal. Nobody saw me take it from him—and maybe nobody ever believe him if he say he was robbed. He is one big gambler, small gal. Maybe they say he lost the money that way—at cards. Pretty soon, bye-and-bye, he will be arrested. He will be kept locked up a long time, because he no can get money to pay back this. Ah, it is a pretty romance, small gal! Your lover in jail while Pedro

is spending the money. Is it not a pretty romance, small gal?

CARMITA (*Falling on her knees, raising face and hands to him in supplication*)—Pedro, for the love of the Holy Virgin, for all that stands for everything that's good in this world, give me that money! See, I am on my knees to you, Pedro. Give it to me—give it to me! (*Emotional business, sobbing, etc., while he takes out a cigarette, coolly lights it, and gazes down at her; then*):

PEDRO—You make a d—d much fuss, small gal! You get the money—

CARMITA (*Rising, eagerly*)—Then give it to me—

PEDRO—You are much fast. You be Mrs. Pedro Sardello, and—then you get this. (*Indicates package.*) You make it present to Frank Carter.

CARMITA (*Eagerly*)—Yes, yes, Pedro. I will do as you say—just give me the package.

PEDRO (*Shoving her gently away*)—You are much fast again. You first must be Mrs. Pedro Sardello—then get package. Eh?

CARMITA (*Aside*)—I'll promise him anything to obtain possession of that money. (*To him*) It shall be as you say, Pedro. Come—let us go. (*Starts for door.*)

PEDRO—Wait, small gal. Always you are in a hurry up. I no can get married till I get a shave. Is it so, small gal?

CARMITA—No, I will not. (*Stops abruptly, as if struck by a sudden thought, then*) Very well. There can be no harm in that. You would look better, I

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think. Come. (*Motions to barber chair.*)

PEDRO (*Throwing away cigarette, smiles broadly, then advances to barber chair*)—I am much pleased, small gal, that you savve with different eyes now, eh? (*About to sit in chair.*)

CARMITA (*Stops him*)—One moment, Pedro—just one moment. We never shave any one here that totes any hardware. Unload your knife and revolver before you get into the chair.

PEDRO (*Amazed*)—No—I'm no d—d fool—

CARMITA—Then you get no shave. Savve? That's the rule of this shop, and it *goes!* Father made that rule a long time ago and it's saved his life many a time.

PEDRO—Saved his life? How, small gal?

CARMITA—Why, if he happened to cut a customer there was no chance for the customer to get back at father by taking a shot at him. Savve again? (*Smiles sweetly.*)

PEDRO (*His suspicion dispelled by her sweet smile and manner, takes revolver and knife from belt and hands them to her*)—All right, small gal; I go by your rules. (*Lies back in chair.*)

CARMITA (*throws knife across the room, then covers him with revolver and speaking quickly*)—Now you, Pedro, I've got you where I want you. Make a false move and I'll shoot off your whiskers and then your head. Straighten up and hand me that package! (*Keeps him covered with gun.*)

PEDRO (*slowly straightens up, then takes out*

package from his inside pocket)—You are joking, maybe, small gal—eh?

CARMITA (*Taking package from him*)—Yes, Pedro—but the joke is on you. Now climb down from that chair and—beat it! (*He gets out of chair, elevates hands above his head, and goes to door, then opens it and exits quickly, scowling fiercely at her as he goes. She holds revolver out at arm's length between thumb and forefinger, and lets it drop to floor, then*) Gracious Mary, I'm glad I didn't have to shoot that thing! It would have scared me to death.

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